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ABSTRACT

This report is based on data and insights obtained during a study tour of the United States and Canada. The purpose of the tour was to combine attending three conferences on social work and social welfare held in Montreal, Canada in the summer of 1984 with visiting various institutions in Canada and the United States. In the first section of this paper, "Aspects of the Crisis," a general review refers in the first instance to the vast differences between countries, including those normally labelled as being equally deprived. The most important aspects of the crisis are subsequently dealt with under the headings: arms race (particularly the nuclear arms race), health, education, housing, food, human rights, poverty and employment, and social security. From these crisis aspects participants in the working paper formulated the following forum topics and prepared brief introductions that were included in the paper. These are: sociocultural shifts, economic choices, technological upheavals, demographic dilemmas, environmental tightrope, political and organizational technocracies, children's needs and rights, youth's future, aging concerns, family survival, feminist affirmation, uprooting and migration, discrimination and segregation, and integration of the disabled. A bibliography, notes on the three conferences, and the study tour itinerary conclude the document. (BZ)

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Social work research: International actualities and trends

Ina Snyman

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Human Sciences Research Council

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Social work research: International actualities and trends

Ina Snyman

Translated by Lalie Rabie

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report is based on data and insights obtained during a study tour of the USA and Canada.

The purpose of the tour was to combine attending three conferences on social work and social welfare in Montreal, Canada, with visiting various institutions in Canada and the USA.

Certain matters relating to social work research and community development were to be dealt with specifically at the conferences and the rest of the tour was planned accordingly.

A number of the proposed visits did not materialize, however, mainly because the earlier part of the tour coincided with the summer recess of the academic institutions and the latter part with their reopening, registration of students, first day of classes, etc. Therefore alternative arrangements were at times made at the last minute, and interviews often conducted with whomever was willing and available.

It was possible though to establish contact everywhere in view of the recent series of conferences, as most of the centres had been represented at one or more of the conferences or had included certain of the themes in their own programmes. The framework of this report is therefore similar to that of the largest of the three conferences, namely the

22nd International Conference on Social Welfare (ICSW) 5 - 11 August 1984.

Much preparatory work had been done for this conference as well as for the other two, and a conference working paper (Hepworth 1984) was distributed to the approximately 1 200 delegates. This working paper deals with the theme of the conference Social welfare in a world in crisis: perceptions and responsibilities, mainly in two sections.

In the first section, "Aspects of the world condition", a general review refers in the first instance to the vast differences between countries, including those normally labelled as being equally deprived. In Tanzania for example life expectancy is 50 and 52 years respectively for males and females, as opposed to Jamaica where the corresponding figures are 69 and 73,5 (Hepworth 1984:6).

The most important aspects of the crisis are subsequently dealt with under the headings: arms race (particularly the nuclear arms race), health, education, housing, food, human rights, poverty and employment, and social security.

From these crisis aspects participants in the working paper formulated the following forum topics and prepared brief introductions that were included in the paper for discussion by different groups during the conference: sociocultural shifts; economic choices; technological upheavals; demographic dilemmas; environmental

tightrope; political and organizational technocracies; children's needs and rights; youth's future; aging concerns; family survival; feminist affirmation; uprooting and migration; discrimination and segregation, and integration of the disabled.

A number of these points were also raised at the conferences in Montreal, namely those of the International Association for Schools of Social Welfare (IASSW)* and the International Federation for Social Workers (IASW) which were held simultaneously at the Palais des Congrès, Montreal, from 31 July to 4 August 1984.

2. ASPECTS OF THE CRISIS

2.1 Arms race

Australian-born Dr Helen Caldicott who is currently living in Boston opened the IASSW conference with a challenging address on the arms race issue in which she attacked several governments in general and certain administrations in particular.

She is a co-founder of the movement, Doctors for Social Responsibility, and is regarded as one of the leading supporters of nuclear disarmament. Information obtained from her address and from subsequent discussions, or from the ICSW working paper, included the following:

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* This, the 22nd conference of the IASSW, was attended by 560 delegates, reportedly the highest attendance figure in the history of the asssociation.

- Since the Second World War there have been 33 serious outbreaks of war in Africa with none of the countries that were involved producing its own arms.*
- There is considerable overarmament, particularly in the field of nuclear arms; only a fraction of the existing supplies of the superpowers would suffice to eliminate one another.
- Faults in the monitoring systems of the superpowers' intelligence services frequently give rise to a red alert on the part of one of these nations in anticipation of maximum aggression from the other side. It is due only to the vigilance of oversolicitous politicians or technicians that a catastrophe has repeatedly been averted.
- One continually hears about the tremendous debt burden of the Third World (May 1984 $83 billion), but the world's annual military spending ($1 000 billion) could discount this debt while the rest could be invested as development reserves for the developing countries (Hepworth 1984: 9).
- The ratio of military expenditure to foreign economic aid of the developed countries is 17:1 (Hepworth 1984).
- The per capita expenditure on defence in developed countries is more than that on public health services and only slightly less than on education, while in developing countries per capita expenditure on education also takes a backseat to military spending (Hepworth 1984).

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* Some of these countries probably do produce less sophisticated weapons on a relatively small scale, but the sophisticated level of warfare in which they are involved point to large-scale possession of and training in the use of foreign arms.

Although no cases were encountered during the tour where social workers or persons in related professions were conducting research on the question of nuclear arms development or arms build-up, one did learn of studies on the effect of war on family relations, the ex-soldier's readjustment to society, etc. Social workers are also politically active, and the views of election candidates on the arms and nuclear issue are carefully noted by social workers' associations and trade unions. During the IFSW symposium a motion was accepted that the federation supported worldwide disarmament, along with a request that all funds voted for nuclear arms be re-directed to grants for social development and social services and the creation of job opportunities for young people.

2.2 Health

During 1979 the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a resolution pledging "Health for all people by the year 2000". This actually entails a global strategy in terms of which it is expected of member countries to report regularly on progress that has been made. Although progress is not as desired, the World Health Organization (WHO) nevertheless continues to propagate low-cost, worldwide health strategies.

The terminology however, rather than the essence of a particular strategy is sometimes adopted. There has been, for instance, universal endorsement of the primary health care approach, but this often amounts to primary medical care in the sense of dependence on sophisticated hospital-based technology concentrated in urban

centres rather than the development of a health infrastructure that makes preventive and rehabilitative care available to all sectors of the population. In the working paper (Hepworth 1984) it is nevertheless shown how the primary health care approach has already contributed towards saving children's lives, for instance through oral rehydration therapy, universal child immunization and the use of child growth charts, all of which are cheap, safe and acceptable as well as easy to implement.

Three of the American universities that were visited had a school or department of public health science that was more closely involved in one way or another than most other disciplines with the school for social work and/or a division for social research. The type of project that institutions, including the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, pay particular attention to is not on the same level of survival and minimum health care as the above-mentioned in the Third World countries, but nevertheless also features prevention and community work, for instance education in the use of tobacco and alcohol, the importance of a sensible diet and the meaningful use of leisure time.

The Institute for Social Research of the above university sometimes assists in incorporating a research design into a project, while the students' own health guidance service emphasizes the same line of thought.

At another of the above universities, the San Diego State University (SDSU), lecturers and students of the College for Human Ser-

vices (which provides training in social work, public health, nursing, communicative disorders and care of the aged) undertake field demonstration projects in collaboration with colleagues in Tijuana on the California-Mexico border.

Primary care and primary prevention are emphasized in the Mexican health care system, and one of the aims of the American participants is to convey insights to the US health system where greater emphasis is placed on secondary and tertiary treatment.

Because the projects form part of the students' practical work, monitoring is done on a continuing basis and the necessary adjustments are timeously introduced. The health branch of the Mexican Department of Social Security accepts full responsibility for the projects while the local population is also extensively involved. This ensures that the work continues uninterruptedly when the students have to reduce their involvement due to university obligations (Kelly 1984).*

2.3 Education

In this field the problems of developed and developing countries also differ significantly.

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* Until recently much emphasis was placed on sophisticated advance planning of welfare and health infrastructure in the USA, and university research contributed to this by assisting with large surveys and the formulation of universal policy guidelines that could be applied by the central government. Although this is still the usual modus operandi, there is an increasing tendency under the present administration to return to more localized, grassroots projects in which voluntary initiative plays a major role. The SDSU project is an example of this.

In the thirty countries identified as the least developed (LDC's) in the world, approximately 80 % of the population is illiterate (Hepworth 1984:14). Attempts to try and rapidly expand education leads to overcrowded classrooms, underpaid and inadequately trained teachers and insufficient facilities.

In developed countries on the other hand, the stabilization of or decrease in the number of children is offset by the growing demands that special education for the highly gifted, multiple handicapped, etc. make on their budgets.

At the same time it is realized that the ordinary education systems in the developed countries have failed to keep up with advancements in technology and science, and are probably unable to do so. And while the home computer can ensure the affluent of advancement in this regard, the less well-off families, especially the children, are finding it increasingly difficult to acquire the necessary technological skills (Hepworth 1984:15).

Technological development has also led to certain adult skills no longer being in demand, which places the whole issue of adult education and adult retraining under the spotlight. The need for such training and retraining is further increased by the worldwide recession and the subsequent decline in job opportunities in certain fields.

Specialists in adult education, welfare workers and government departments concerned with manpower development are therefore paying particular attention to one or more of the following:

(1) Adults who were never or inadequately trained for the modern high or micro-technological labour market, and who for some reason or other have to enter this market now. Examples of projects aimed at such persons are two three-year demonstration projects initiated by the social work division of the YWCA in Toronto with the financial support of the Canadian manpower development department (Canada Employment and Immigration).

One such project is aimed particularly at young single mothers who receive allowances from the state and who would be dependent on welfare for a considerable length of time unless entry into the labour market were effected. Training extends over 13 or 26 weeks with admission on a more or less continuous basis, and the course makes provision for a non-formal differentiated learning programme in which participants develop their skills according to their individual needs and at their own pace particularly through work at home, independent assignments and class discussions.

Although no formal evaluation design is incorporated in the programme, the various parties involved in the project nevertheless note the degree of success achieved with the completion of the course and job placement afterwards. The causes for limited success are investigated and certain adjustments made. For example, the training programme has already been supplemented by child

care services at the training centre, transport subsidies and subsidized or free telephone facilities that are required particularly for job seeking.*

The second of the two YWCA projects is aimed particularly at immigrant women, the emphasis being on the upgrading of their qualification in English and Mathematics. The course is longer and more formal and its purpose is especially to assist these women's entry into microtechnology, a field in which women in North America are ployed on a large scale. According to the Spanish-speaking social worker involved in the project the problems that are encountered correspond broadly with those of the first project, except that they are concerned more with cultural differences and the relatively long period that has passed since the women left school.

(2) Adults who have functioned in a particular work situation for years but who are forced to make a change due to situational circumstances. The slump in the fishing industry in Newfoundland, Canada, has given rise to such a situation, and the Centre for Human Relations and Community Studies of the Department of Applied Social Science, Concordia University, Montreal, is engaged in applying a model through which these workers can be retrained. This

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* The attention thus paid to input factors confirms the need not to accept when evaluating that the type of intervention technique is the only factor that ensures success, and that only end results should therefore be measured. According to Tripodi (1983: 34-38) goal achievement consists of three phases, the first of which is the establishment of a structure or framework within which the helping action can be properly launched and the target reached. Williams and Anderson (1975: 29-30) identify three sets of success indicators of which the first set, the short-term or effort indicators, points to whether the service is provided and what the extent of the service is.

model is based on a study of the learning process in working persons and other more adult students following courses at the centre.

Dr Marilyn Taylor (see Taylor 1981: 133-146) of the centre as well as other persons with whom interviews were conducted, pays particular attention to model development, and although this form of research is used at the lowest level of knowledge building (Tripodi 1981: 199), it is nevertheless important to an applied science such as social work that has a less pronounced theoretical understructure. At the same time this relates to the need of the applied sciences to create research-based principles of practice (Gordon 1984: 3-6).

2.4 Housing

Job opportunity draws millions of people to already overpopulated cities, giving rise to air pollution, homelessness and squatting while placing tremendous pressure on the existing infrastructure and community networks. Since the Habitat conference in 1976 the United Nations has devoted much attention to all aspects of human settlement, and plans a "Habitat Year" for 1987 that will centre mainly on the world's estimated 100 million homeless persons (Hepworth 1984:17).

Accommodation of refugees and immigrants poses a major headache particularly in Canada and in certain parts of the USA, while at the same time attempts are increasingly being made in these coun-

tries to accommodate the aged and handicapped to a lesser extent in special residences and to adapt existing housing to their needs instead, or to subsidize their accommodation in such housing. In both these countries the government supports programmes particularly where voluntary organizations, utility companies and businesses are involved in the field of home care including a home help service, home repairs and the installation of security systems (Romeder 1982: 54-56).

The programmes are usually, although not necessarily, operationalized by means of pilot and demonstration projects, and in order to meet the government's requirements with regard to accountability an evaluation or monitoring research design is incorporated in the project.*

2.5 Food

This issue was raised particularly during the three Montreal conferences in discussions regarding the economic recession, the prolonged drought in many parts of the world, female labour and the intellectual development of young children. Records of the WHO and UNICEF indicate that conditions of serious malnutrition and undernourishment in young children are reversable in cases where clinics are attended regularly and nutritional assistants and com-

* A considerable amount of documentation on this was received from the US Department of Health and Human Services (Office of Human Development Service). Regular publications include Human Development News and the journal Aging which both appear bimonthly, and the Federal Register, a type of government gazette in which the availability of funds for policy research and demonstration projects are announced and applications for funds invited.

munity health workers do follow-up work at home. Family nutrition being mainly the concern of women it is therefore important that more attention be paid to their working conditions, particularly in regions where they also play a role in agriculture and accordingly in food production (Hepworth 1984: 18-19).

Another matter that was raised was improved food production,* but in view of the emphasis that was placed on world crises rather than possible solutions, relatively little attention was paid to the many projects worldwide that are aimed at intensive unsophisticated soil cultivation. At the Institute for Cultural Affairs, Chicago, it was learnt, however, that such projects had been initiated in inter alia India, Africa and Papua, New Guinea. These community development programmes contain elements of developmental research** in that all aspects of the process are monitored and insights outlined particularly in respect of methodological approaches appropriate for further expansion and repetition of the programmmes in other parts of the world.

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* In her closing paper, "Paths to the future", on 11 August 1984 Madame M. Kane, Senegalese Minister of Social Development, laments the fact that the developing countries are so heavily dependent on foreign aid. She believes that they should firstly try to become independent in respect of food particularly through improved water provision. She especially recommends that dam projects be undertaken with a view to combating the tremendous desertification in certain parts of the world.

** In a chapter entitled "Developmental research: a model for interventional innovation", Thomas (1981: 590-605) states that although the methodology of behavioural sciences research will probably remain the basis of social work research aimed at building knowledge, another model was nevertheless required for the development of social technology. (Also cf. Williams 1971: Chapter 4 "Social science research and policy relevance", and Gordon 1984: 3-6.)

On the other hand the contradiction that in one part of the world there are concerted policies of food wastage in order to ensure high productivity or maintain high prices in order to achieve optimum employment, while in other parts of the world there is not enough basic food to ensure survival, was once again pointed out at the conferences.

From the large number of groups for obese people that participated in the exhibitions ("show case") of self-help groups it was clear that abundant food posed its own problems. A video film on self-help groups produced by a television company in Toronto and which is at present being distributed worldwide, also points out the variety of problems and the often poor quality of life of the grossly overweight person.*

Although social workers are not normally employed by such self-help groups to provide therapy, they often play a role in educating the public, promoting public relations, and as consultants.

2.6 Human rights

One of the basic premises of the welfare state is that all people are entitled to certain services, that such services should be regarded as utilities (for instance streets, parks, libraries and schools) and not as "welfare" or social assistance, and that responsibility for these services should be vested in the public authorities.

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* These groups are concerned specifically with weight problems related to food intake, but there are also groups for those whose weight problems are related to other factors.

In a number of cases the welfare state has brought considerable relief to the poor and disadvantaged, but in step with the rise in the standard of living new problems, particularly those related to human relations and political rights, have emerged. Generous state provision for instance always has an element of social control attached to it, while it also curbs human initiative (Hepworth 1984: 21-22).

A broader view of the welfare state has led to considerable foreign aid being given to the developing countries, and while some feel that much still remains to be done, there are others who oppose this view on the basis that "foreign aid does not promote development because it increases dependence" (according to Prof. C.K. Omari of the University of Dar Es Salaam, one of the speakers during a session of the ICSW on 6 August). Such aid often takes the form of loans, and this therefore only leads to more debt that cannot be repaid.

The distribution of benefits almost without exception has certain strings attached in that conditions are laid down or some form of reciprocation or other is expected, and often the non-official control exercised by the "neighbour" in self-help and mutual aid can be severer than official control (Hepworth 1984: 21). Consequently there is a worldwide swing towards the development of positive techniques in the use of power. Those in positions of authority, for instance, are increasingly using education and guidance, while those insisting on certain privileges and rights are to a greater extent concentrating on lobbying, use of the me-

dia, critical analysis and questioning of policy, etc. The above techniques are observed particularly in the activities of certain self-interest movements with a strong pressure group bias, such as among women, immigrants and refugees, the disabled and other minority groups. During the conferences in Montreal, the Canadian Coalition of Provincial Organizations of the Handicapped presented the première of the film "Sortie". This illustrates how the disabled are emerging for the first time from back rooms, isolationary institutions and dreary sheltered employment workshops - to mobilize themselves and develop into political pressure groups. The social workers who act as consultants to these groups should therefore feel at ease in and be able to act in a more activist capacity.

2.7 Poverty and employment

"We should not accept the idea of a permanent underclass as part of a so-called free society" stated one of the ICSW speakers, quoting the pronouncement of the senate subcommittee on the problems of the poor in the USA. To some people this means that there should not be any underprivileged groups, while others are of the opinion that the different layers of the population can each in turn form such a underclass.

For supporters of the first school of thought the slogan "Jobs for all" points to the solution found in countries such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan where industries and businesses operate manpower intensively despite the development of micro and macro-

technology. (Also cf. Canadian Council on Social Development 1984: 28.)

Those who believe that a poorer class is inevitable but that groups can take turns at this, are propogating curtailment of the growth rate in a country and distribution of resources to the underprivileged.

A country such as the USA however - especially under the present administration - believes that growth maintains a momentum of its own and that there should be minimal interference by the state. But unlike the above three countries, in the USA the large-scale use of high technology in particular has led to the dismissal of thousands of workers who previously belonged to the high income groups. Because such people are not always retrainable, or because of the considerable time factor involved, service professions (foodstalls, vehicle parking or parkades) and community services (family planning, neighbourhood restoration projects, etc.) are entered instead. Although these are also attempts at providing employment for all, these areas of work are financially unrewarding, and experts see this as amounting to the dismantling of the middle class in the USA.

Consequently, this to some extent means that the idea of substitution for the underclass is, unintentionally, being put into ef-

fect.*

At the Institute for Social Research of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, it was accordingly found on the basis of a countrywide longitudinal study that there is no longer a permanent underclass. Contrary to the general assumption that roughly 12 % of the American population are continuously dependent on social support, it was found that over a period of 10 years only 2 % were continuously, i.e. for more than 7 of the 10 years, dependent on such support. Approximately 8,5 % of the population received continuous support only for a few years, and were also not wholly dependent on it but received it to supplement other income (Duncan 1983 -1984: 3-5).**

There is nevertheless a real and expected increase in poverty worldwide. Hepworth (1984: 24-25) indicates this increase as the number of households in poverty, urban and rural, 1975 to 2000, and although he does not include figures for North America, census figures in the USA indicate that at present 15,2 % of families are living below the poverty line as opposed to 15,0 % in 1980. This increase is ascribed particularly to an increase in the number of mother-based single parent families that depends mainly on either

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* This "substitution" does not however occur between countries, the differences usually being too great for this. For example the per capita gross income (GNP) in 1980 of the developing countries was $794 as opposed to $8 477 for the developed countries. In Tanzania this amount was $264 as opposed to $11 347 in the USA (Hepworth 1984: 35).

** It is true, however, that at any particular time during the period 1969 to 1978 more than one out of every five Americans in a family received social support. For a complete picture, however, cross-sectional surveys should be supplemented with longitudinal studies.

inadequate maintenance by a father and/or inadequate state support.

In an attempt at alleviating this form of poverty while at the same time reducing the burden that it places on the state, the Office of Human Development Services of the Department of Health and Human Services is trying, through its Work Incentive Programme (WIN), to help persons above the age of 16 years in families that have applied for or are already receiving state aid (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) to obtain gainful employment instead.*

2.8 Social security

In the preceding section it has been pointed out that social support should be regarded as an important financial aid in difficult times rather than as a major permanent source of income.

However, in view of the regularity with which certain types of crises occur - hitting any section of the population - it is better to make provision during prosperous times than to claim support from general tax on the basis of need or inability that has to be proved by way of a means test. Social security becomes especially important and serves as a safety net in times of unemployment and sickness.

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* This programme is similar to the Canadian programmes that have already been discussed.

On the other hand, the proportions that unemployment has reached almost worldwide make severe demands on social security as well as on social assistance, and in this regard the state in particular bears a heavy burden. Neither do the solutions that are offered to alleviate unemployment necessarily provide permanent remedies, for instance schemes that enable the elderly to retire earlier and the sharing of work or jobs. In either case there is loss of revenue for the social security system as well as for the aged individual and the job sharer (Hepworth 1984: 26).

The general view is nevertheless that social security should be as comprehensive as possible and not provide only for certain groups under very limited conditions. In a preview of the international conferences a member of the Dutch delegation who was one of the speakers expressed the view that due to the lack of a universal social security system there was hardly ever redistribution of resources from the rich to the poor, but more than likely from the lower income groups who have jobs to those without jobs (Wiercx 1984: 9).

In the USA the federal government encourages research on and supports programmes whereby the private employer, business or industry plays a greater part in the care and social security of its employees, including the safeguarding of different facets of the employee's life and that of his family and not only protection against dismissal and unemployment (US Department of Health and Human Services 1984: 22 410).

The fact that the central government supports this research (which can for instance be embodied in case studies and state-of-the-art analyses) and related programmes, indicates that it does not try to shirk its responsibility but that it wants to reduce direct interference by the state in the lives of ordinary citizens.*

3. PERCEPTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(Forum topics during ICSW)

During the first four days of the ICSW three or four concurrent sessions (forums) were presented every day.

Depending on the language medium of the keynote speakers or the quality of the translation, part of or an entire session was attended. As already mentioned, the topics or certain aspects of the forums were also raised during the other two conferences or in the course of the study tour, therefore each of the topics will now be discussed.

3.1 Sociocultural shifts

Basic literacy and numeracy are introduced to remote parts of the world by means of improved communication systems, stimulating a

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* This ties in with the discussion on state aid and state control under "Human rights".

desire in people to share in the opportunities and luxuries experienced by others.

These new skills and "tastes" usually cannot be accommodated in such remote and less developed parts, and this leads to dissatisfaction and unreasonable demands, as well as overhasty urbanization and even emigration.

However, other factors also prompt people to move away from such less favourable environments, including prolonged droughts, mechanization of agriculture that leads to loss of livelihood for many, and population growth.

The subsequent expansion of metropolitan areas makes particular demands on people's ability to co-exist peacefully and enjoy a reasonable standard of living. The negative results of high density urban life, which highlights the differences between people, include rivalry for scarce resources as well as noise, air pollution and traffic congestion (Hepworth 1984: 31).

According to a report by the Social Science Research Laboratory of the San Diego State University (SSRL September 1984: 3-4), considerable geographical mobility is evident also in a developed country such as the USA although the pattern is different from the above. During the period March 1981 to March 1982 approximately 17 % of the population aged one year and older moved within the USA. The moves were often between cities, but approximately 2 million people during this period moved from central city areas to

suburbs. Such moves almost invariably bring about changes in life-style.

The above source (p.3) also refers to the substantial changes in family values and behaviour witnessed in the USA due to inter alia changes in women's attitudes towards marriage, the increasing number of couples who prefer to live together rather than marry, the high divorce rate, the growing number of working married women, the high eligitimacy figure, and the expectation that almost one-third of young White women in their twenties will postpone the start of a family for so long that they may well end up childless.

These changes make extraordinary demands on economic and welfare systems, and on the professional persons in particular - including social workers - who act within these systems.

3.2 Economic choices

The question whether the current world crisis is perceived as an economic, social, political or psychological crisis is answered differently according to the perceptions of the person or groups being addressed.

De Kok (Wiercx 1984: 8-9) believes that the majority of Western governments depend too much on the formal market economy, supporting it exclusively at the expense of the more informal neighbourhood economy. Particularly amazing is the fact that in countries where great emphasis is placed on self-help, voluntary

work, privatization and decentralization, the government barely tolerates the informal sector, or encourages it at the most in the form of home industries which have a certain nostalgic value and can serve as a tourist attraction. During economic crises the formal sector is unable to cope, and such countries then lack a supportive informal sector that can absorb, inter alia, unemployment and cutbacks in earnings.

De Kok (Wiercx 1984: 8 - 9) emphasizes however that the informal sector cannot be regarded merely as an economic force that is kept politically in a marginal position. Only by incorporating this sector in the major organizational decision-making systems of a country, can the principles of responsibility and autonomy be put into practice.

Another facet of what is regarded mainly as an economic crisis concerns the field of social provisions. According to Idenburg (Wiercx 1984: 9) the core of the crisis is the exorbitant cost of maintaining the welfare state because of the increasing emphasis on the so-called quality of services: fewer pupils per teacher, more X rays of a fractured leg, and everyone being entitled to these services. But inequality is reinstated when those who do not have anything to fall back onto are hit the hardest by cutbacks in government spending. In view of this Idenburg pleads for the maintenance of provisions over a wider base at the expense of so-called quality which in times of need can actually be regarded as a luxury.

Developing countries too, where the existence of a welfare state has not been dreamed of, are advised not to strive for luxuries during lean times, but to learn from the lessons of the "sanitary revolution" of the 19th century and concentrate on pure water and air, good drainage, proper housing and primary health services which can serve as a basis for eventually achieving a reasonable degree of prosperity for all (Hepworth 1984: 34).

However, according to Madame Kane, Senegal's Minister of Social Development, the developing countries often determine their priorities according to these guidelines, but the conditions attached to foreign aid frequently require expenditure on luxury projects that do not provide for basic services.*

During all three of the conferences as well as during the study tour the question of "privatization" was frequently raised, in terms of which the state is involved less directly in the provision of public and welfare services, and employers in particular are encouraged to create these facilities, or to arrange the work situation in such a way that the need for some of the facilities is reduced. For example, if women are able to take work home, this reduces the demand for and pressure on services for preschool children.

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* Senegal itself for instance has a major water supply problem and in view of this decided to concentrate on water projects (for which there is a Ministry of Hydrolics) and on cereal crops for human consumption. However this is not the type of priority that attracts foreign sponsors.

Where necessary the state purchases services from co-operatives, etc. on the assumption that the ensuing competition to secure and keep such a "contract" may improve the standard of service.

The arguments against privatization are numerous (cf. inter alia Canadian Council on Social Development 1984: 51-63), but in a country such as the USA this is the basis on which the government (Human Development Services in particular) enters into contracts with non-statutory bodies for most of the research and demonstration projects (R & D's). The aim is sometimes merely to prove the feasibility of an idea, but outcome measurement is often incorporated in order to determine benefits or make comparisons (Williams 1971: 54-55; Department of Health and Human Services 1984). At the same time the particular research approaches and relevant techniques are then refined (Baxter et al. 1983).

3.3 Technological upheavals

The increase in jobs in the service sector on account of the "taking over" of work by machines, computers, etc. in other sectors has already been mentioned. Certain technological fields, however, have remained fairly labour intensive, for instance microelectronics that offers quite a variety of job opportunities in communications, especially for women.

In certain developing countries on the other hand, the introduction of the tractor and other mechanical labour-saving implements has cost the woman her traditional role as crop producer, with the

result that the urbanization process with respect to women is accelerating.

Another point that was frequently raised during the conferences was the need for technologically advanced countries to become accustomed to the idea of a reduced working week, this being a better solution than large-scale dismissal of so-called redundant workers. In view of the increase in leisure time people can then become involved in various activities aimed at improving the quality of life in a community, for instance assisting the disabled, children of single-parent families or the aged, or participating in neighbourhood improvement projects (Hepworth 1984: 37).

One of the most important consequences of the technological revolution is the fact that longer training is no longer synonymous with greater employability or more gainful employment. Work skills rapidly become obsolete, while most activities are specialized and are acquired over a shorter rather than a longer period. And although better educational qualifications usually contribute to an increase in productivity, many people today are educated for more years than is required by the available jobs. This is called the "qualification syndrome" and it is found particularly in developing countries where people are partial to the type of formal training - particularly in the administrative or the arts fields - reminiscent of the colonial era.

According to the Assistant Deputy Minister for Social Service Programmes of Quebec, however, tecnological upheavals do not af-

fect only the availability of work but also the quality of the work environment. She believes for instance that technological development leads to large-scale bureaucratization, an intolerable situation for the social worker whose work cannot be measured easily according to industrial standards of productivity (Vaillant, August 1984: 4-5).

During the study tour particular attention was paid to the extent to which training in social work research also involved training in the use of the computer. Such training generally forms a substantial part of both the theoretical and practical components of the research course, although less so at an institution such as the Loyola University, Chicago, with its strong clinical orientation than at universities where more emphasis is placed on research with a view to policy formulation, planning and programme development in respect of welfare matters and where large contracts are received from the state for this purpose.

The dean of the School for Social Welfare* of the University of California, Berkeley, draws a distinction between social work research and social welfare research, and expects of students who wish to specialize in the former to improve their skills in therapeutic practice and its design and development, while those who are interested in planning and managerial positions in large welfare concerns should become adept at handling large data sets.

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* Harry Specht who is probably better known in South Africa as co-author of various books on community work.

The latter obviously involves considerable practice in advanced data analysis.

Visits were also paid to the universities' institutes for social research where social work students, like all others, can apply for assistance with their research projects as well as for attending formal computer courses. Particularly noteworthy in this respect are the National Opinion Research Centre (NORC) of the University of Chicago and the Social Science Research Laboratory (SSRL) of the San Diego State University. At the former, the person interviewed was a former member of the School for Social Service Administration,* and close liaison exists between the centre and the school. The SSRL in San Diego has three divisions of which the one, Instructional Services, concentrates on supporting the university's classroom work, for instance through work group sessions and lectures, but particularly by assisting students with their theses.

There is also a public terminal room where those using it have access to free consultation without appointment with personnel of the Instructional Services Division (SSRL August 1984: 2).

3.4 Demographic dilemmas

Of a projected world population of 6 billion in the year 2000, almost 5 billion will live in developing countries. Only a decline

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* This name also points towards strong emphasis on rendering welfare services rather than on purely social work, and a substantial number of the projects concern client follow-up and the evaluation of welfare programmes on a statewide or national basis (Testa 1983).

in fertility to below replacement level could limit such growth, but "...this is considered a remote prospect in the developing world" (Hepworth 1984: 38).

Such a decline in fertility has already occurred in the developed countries, but in order to plan for the future population trends other than fertility should also be studied, for instance a decrease or increase in the numbers entering the labour market or in the number of registered voters. In the USA for instance, the latter was expected to have risen to 174 million by November 1984, which is 4,2 million more than during the congress election of 1982 and almost 10 million more than during the 1980 presidential election. The greatest increase was in the age group 25 to 44 years that had increased from 62,7 to 72,2 million since 1980 (SSRL September 1984: 4).

The number of households had not increased significantly, however, while there had been over the years - in other words since 1970 - a marked decline in the number of households consisting of families. Whereas 81 % of American households had consisted of families in 1970, this figure had dropped to 73 % in 1983 (SSRL August 1984: 4). Various factors account for this including migrant workers who are not accompanied by their families and an increase in the number of people who prefer to remain single. People involved in welfare services, however, believe that the federal government's policy of deinstitutionalization and community support has led to thousands of aged and disabled persons as well as certain types of delinquents and ex-convicts being able to function inde-

pendently in society. It is therefore not surprising that some of the most lucrative research and demonstration (R & D) allowances of the US Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Human Development are available specifically for community projects aimed at promoting this lifestyle.

3.5 The environmental tightrope

Since the UN conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972, special efforts have been made to sensitize people to the problems of pollution, the overuse and misuse of natural resources, and the added demands on the environment resulting from rapid population growth (Hepworth 1984: 40).

In the meantime other environmental problems have also become more prominent in view of the fact that while mankind itself is largely to blame for the devastation of natural resources, people are likely to suffer most from the resultant exhaustion of resources.

For example, one finds desertification and deforestation of large parts of the world - that developing countries are often blamed for - but also toxification of other areas through careless handling of toxic waste which usually occurs in industrialized countries.

In his keynote address to the forum on 7 August, the secretary of the Indian Department of Social Welfare who is also a social worker and lawyer, spoke in particular about the violation of hu-

man rights when the public is kept ignorant of the risks involved in the storing, transporting and dumping of certain chemical waste. Within this context he equates the right to information with the right to clean air and safe water,* and believes it to be the social worker's duty to concern himself with these aspects of people's lives as much as with community services, job opportunities, etc.

In large cities throughout the world social workers, and specifically community workers, are becoming increasingly involved in the efforts of inter alios planners, architects and engineers to bring renewal especially in polluted city centres and industrial areas, inter alia through the introduction of smokeless and traffic-free zones and by encouraging neighbourhood rehabilitation and beautifying projects and the building of underground parking, recreation and business centres.

By the same token the development of suburbs is aimed at meeting the need people have to escape from the overcrowding and other unpleasant aspects of urban life. Transport between the suburbs and the work place, which is often still in the city centre, is ironically enough the cause of a further major form of pollution, namely that associated with traffic congestion. In Montreal for instance where the city centre is made more pleasant with its underground network of shopping centres, parking garages, theatres

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* In the USA 99 % of the population have access to "safe" water as opposed to 9 % in Sierra Leone and 39 % in Tanzania. In the developing countries an average of 57 % of the population have access to clean water as opposed to 94 % in the developed countries (Hepworth 1984: 43).

and an efficient and safe underground rail service (with excellent bus connections) and even a number of welfare facilities, certain areas on the periphery of the city centre have become more or less intolerable on account of the serious traffic and pollution problems caused by suburban traffic.

Whereas bread-and-butter issues have largely been solved in the developed countries, these quality-of-life factors pose a challenge also to those in the helping professions.

3.6 Political and organizational technocracies

The idiosyncracies of bureaucracy are pointed out in the introduction to the topic in the ICSW's working paper: it both maximizes efficiency and reduces it; it demands professional and technical knowledge, yet often derides it; it provides a career ladder for millions, and it stifles individual initiative.

It has been called the cult of management efficiency and the cost-benefit industry (Hepworth 1984: 44), but is often proved to be inefficient and outrageously expensive.

In the less developed countries, some professional, technological and administrative skills regarded as the most sophisticated that are available may simply be inappropriate, and often simpler processes and techniques cater better for the particular needs of the local population.

Despite the general "climate", Michael Longford of the Department of Health and Social Security, London, outlined the benefits of a large, centralized service-rendering organization in a paper read on this topic during the ICSW's forum on 7 August. He pointed out that as with the elephant (the particular department being housed in The Elephant and Castle) a bureaucratic organization too can have power, a good memory, resolution, the ability to undertake a large amount of work, high visibility and perseverance concealed beneath an ungainly and seemingly sluggish exterior. (Longford advises people to look past the thick skin to the heart of gold that lies underneath.)

In the USA, as already mentioned, everything possible is being done to decentralize and privatize certain of the welfare services falling under the Division for Human Development of the Department of Health and Human Services, although the government still tries to meet its obligations by providing financial support and by monitoring standards and progress. It is nevertheless realized that certain basic social support and social security benefits such as pensions and allowances require a system similar to the "elephant" in which provision is made for continuity, reliability, etc.

Large bureaucracies, decentralized, localized services or simple "applied" technology: the relevance and success of decisions and programmes are to a large extent linked to the way in which essential information on realities flows in a community, and one of the tasks of social workers and particularly community workers is to

assist the different interest groups in articulating and communicating their needs, plans and constraints (Hepworth 1984: 45).

3.7 Children's needs and rights

Despite growing alarm over the problems of an aging world population, a large percentage of that population is nevertheless still under the age of 15 years. As a matter of fact, in most of the African countries this age group constitutes more than 40 % of the population, with the percentages not greatly different for Asia and South America (Hepworth 1984: 46).

Although much has already been done to reduce child mortality, the health of children in the developing countries still leaves much to be desired, and in the section on health mention has been made of UNICEF's efforts to have early immunization, the use of growth charts, and so forth established as national health priorities. National surveys carried out during 1981, the International Year of Disabled Persons, also indicated the incidence of hereditary physical and mental defects among children, thus highlighting the need for diagnostic, preventive and development services where certain problems and impairments can be detected and remedied timeously.

Day care being an important aspect of child care, the Head Start programme was initiated in the USA in 1965 to pay attention to all aspects of the preschool child from low income families. This programme gained impetus with the acceptance of the Omnibus Budget

Reconciliation Act of 1981 according to which Head Start became a demonstration programme sponsored by the Office of Human Development Services. Enough evaluation studies on Head Start projects have already been done - 9 000 HS centres had already been established in the USA, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the US trust areas by 1980 - to warrant certain definite conclusions on the value of the projects, and the knowledge gained so far is being broadened and expanded by means of a series of demonstration and training programmes (US Department of Health and Human Services April 1980: 2-3).

Another aspect of child care that received attention in the working paper was child neglect and abuse which is prevalent also in the developed countries, where single parents are under considerable stress and therefore unable to perform their task properly.* The children's bureau of the US Office of Human Development Services renders assistance to the different American states and to certain welfare organizations to provide children's aid programmes, and especially to initiate demonstration and research projects.

During the study tour interviews were conducted with two persons who have carried out extensive research programmes on children in substitute care. Dr Mark Testa of the National Opinion Research Centre referred to earlier in connection with technological upheavals, conducted a longitudinal study on foster children and de-

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* In Canada as many as 5 % of children under the age of 15 years might have contact with the child welfare services in one year.

termined that contrary to popular belief, a very small percentage of children in the USA remain in foster care for relatively long periods. A large percentage of children may however be in foster care at any particular time, and the findings therefore emphasize the need to supplement cross-sectional surveys with longitudinal studies.*

The second person, Dr Toshio Tatara, System Director of the Voluntary Cooperative Information System (VCIS) at the American Public Welfare Association (APWA) in Washington D.C., has made a statistical summary of the VCIS's national child welfare data base on children in substitute care and adoption (Tatara 1983). This summary was published as a comprehensive report on the characteristics of such children, and it is expected that the Office of Human Development that co-financed the study, will apply the information largely for purposes of further planning.**

3.8 The youth's future

Gisela Konopka of the University of Minnesota, well-known lecturer and author on social group work, institutional care and youth work was the keynote speaker of the ICSW forum on 8 August.

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* As also found in the study on the extent of people's dependence on social support mentioned in 2.7 Poverty and employment.

** Dr Tatara has had training in management and administration and specializes in the development of software by means of which large welfare data bases can be analysed. He has been invited to read a paper during the international conferences in Tokyo in 1986, and social work in South Africa would benefit if he could come here on the return journey to visit large welfare organizations and exchange ideas with them on on-going data collection and analysis.

With a view to International Youth Year 1985 she had conducted a worldwide study of a mainly quantitative nature on young people's needs and preferences. She subsequently reached the conclusion inter alia that, despite the generation gap, young people also desired mainly a family and a good job. On account of the shortage of work in most countries many of them do not immediately find jobs after completing their secondary or tertiary training, which leads to disillusionment and rebellion as well as a break with traditional adult work values (Shore 1984: 6-7).

In order to try and combat the problems concerning the youth, the themes chosen for the International Youth Year are participation, development and peace, and in Canada and the USA it was learnt that programmes had already been initiated and/or were being developed on the basis of these themes. For example, the Salvation Army in Canada* is involved in particular in recreational and activity programmes for youth identified as potential criminals, while the YWCA pays attention to the ability of young women to obtain and hold down a job.

In the USA the Youth Development Bureau (of the HDS) administers the Runaway Youth Act and has already financed approximately 200 projects for runaways and sponsors a national telephone service, thereby keeping thousands of young runaways out of the courts.

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* This information was obtained from the liaison officer of the Salvation Army in Ottawa. He had lived in South Africa as a child and remained sufficiently in touch to communicate also on Salvation Army activities in South Africa.

However, young people are not only rebellious, they are also depressed, and the incidence of suicide among the youth has increased to such an extent that it has become the third most general cause of death among adolescents in the USA (Department of Health and Human Services, 23 August 1984: 33 539). The HDS therefore also supports efforts by the Runaway Youth Centers to develop and test treatment approaches for such young people.

Because of the sheer magnitude of numbers, the problems facing the developing countries with regard to the youth are probably even greater, for by the year 2000 they will have to provide accommodation, training, job opportunities and other services to more than 1 800 million people under the age of 14 years, as opposed to the less than 400 million for which the developed countries will then be responsible (Hepworth 1984: 51).

3.9 Aging concerns

The position of the aged was discussed at all three the conferences, namely the IASSW congress, the IFSW symposium and the ICSW conference. The author attended only the latter, however, in view of the specific projects for the aged - one of which also had an evaluation component attached to it - that were included in the programme.

Contradictions in people's views regarding the care of the aged is clearly illustrated by the following two opinions expressed roughly five minutes apart. Firstly, "The transition from home to

nursing home means that a tremendous number of things have to be sacrificed. People do not realize this and therefore do not prepare the aged for these 'losses'", and secondly: "We force old people with weak eyesight and hearing to cope in society." The first argument centres on that which the aged person has to sacrifice on leaving the community, and the second on the disadvantages of remaining in the community.

The dilemma in this case is that while life expectancy is increasing, people nevertheless lose certain of their faculties with age, and even where physical health remains good there can be loss of mental health at a relatively early stage. One of the aims of the US government's policy of deinstitutionalization was the reintegration in society of aged people who had experienced only a degree of mental deterioration without actually being mentally disturbed. On being discharged from the psychiatric institutions, however, these people were unable to cope on their own and had to be readmitted.

It was nevertheless found that there had been an improvement in their mental condition and that they were able to cope in small homes (so-called cottages) in the community. The one project dealt with in the forum concerned the above, and the term "self-health" was accordingly proposed to indicate the idea of better health through a person's own efforts and those of others in the community.*

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* The other project concerns the development of community resources as part of a support network for the aged in a community, for in-

The US government is determined to implement its principles of volunteerism, private sector initiatives (rather than public service rendering) and competition (also in welfare services) to the full, particularly with regard to the increasing numbers of aged people in the community.

Accordingly, one of the largest demonstration programmes sponsored by the HDS is the National Long-term Care Channeling Program in which various states are already participating, and on the first phase of which a report has appeared (Baxter et al. 1983). In this programme the emphasis is on the creation of community resources to which the aged are channelled according to their needs.

The government has appointed an independent firm involved in policy research and evaluation to assess the programme, and the particular research framework could well be used to evaluate other types of services as well.

3.10 Family survival

Despite the popular belief that the nuclear family represents the most common or most widely accepted form of family, there has always been a diversity of family forms around the world with new ones developing from time to time. One form commonly found at present is the permanent or temporary single-parent family. Desertion and divorce are two of the main causes of the more perma-

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stance a telephone subscribers' programme and a neighbourliness service.

nent form of single-parenthood while in other cases contract and migrant labour lead to fathers being separated from their families for long periods, often not returning at all - which then turns the separation into a permanent form of single-parenthood (Hepworth 1984: 55).

In many cases both parents commute between work and home every day and have little time left to spend with each other or as a family.

The effects of the above as well as other factors associated with poverty, the pressures of modern society, etc. manifest themselves in child neglect and child abuse or juvenile problems as discussed in preceding sections.

Family violence, particularly wife abuse, is a further result of stress placed on or tension within the family, and in the USA and Canada special services have been introduced to cope with these problems in particular. In Canada where the Department of National Health and Welfare incorporates a National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, special efforts are made to inform married women of their rights and the actions open to them, including the legal recourse offered by the Canadian penal code in a case of wife abuse (Minister of Supply and Services 1983).

In the USA the Office on Domestic Violence forms part of the Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF - which in turn falls under the US Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Human Development Services). Like its Canadian counter-

part it has a central information bureau (clearing house) and provides technical assistance to local groups for the development of their own aid programmes.

An important part of the ACYF's work concerns the sponsoring of research studies and demonstration projects on behalf of families through its Research, Demonstration and Evaluation Division. One of the organizations benefiting from this is Family Service America (FSA, formerly known as FSAA: Family Service Association of America). The FSA also undertakes independent research and for many years maintained a permanent research division, but on account of cutbacks in the financial support of welfare organizations. it now uses a retired researcher on an ad hoc basis.

Here again it is evident how a welfare organization's research activities can be subdivided. Firstly there is the purely social work research that concerns mainly intervention by social workers and the consequences of this for their clients, the community and themselves, and the ad hoc researcher used by FSA is at present engaged in just such a study on burn-out among social workers.

Secondly there is the Division of Information Systems and Services where the information (statistics) normally collected by a large, co-ordinating organization such as FSA is analysed in order to provide answers to certain questions. For instance, in this respect FSA has in recent years performed analyses of personnel issues and case load at its roughly 270 member organizations. The division also conducts special surveys among its member organiza-

tions, for example a questionnaire survey on the extent to which certain problems in families had increased or decreased and on which a short report appeared in November 1983 (Fenton 1983).*

The third division is concerned with overhead planning including the identification of urgent social needs and the planning of proposed research (for instance by assisting in the development of a certain number of new local organizations or by recruiting them as member organizations of FSA). This division also monitors the extent to which the predetermined goals have been achieved. For this purpose the Evaluation and Strategic Planning Committee was established in 1983 to assist the organization in its monitoring task.

The FSA has played a major educational role over the years by means of "Plays for Living", using specially created short dramas to illustrate certain problems and propagate and demonstrate certain attitudes and techniques.

3.11 Feminist affirmation

Despite the many job opportunities that certain of the newer job fields such as microtechnology offer women, Mrs Simon Veil (a member and former president of the European Parliament) has nevertheless found women to be one of the primary groups subjected to

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* It appeared that unemployment, financial insecurity and debts were increasing rapidly and could therefore be regarded as the main concern. The HDS also identified employment and income generation as one of the highest of 14 top priorities in its 1982 survey of research priorities, and in South Africa the survey of priorities for social work research of the HSRC's Division for Social Work Research, identified the finding of ways in which social work and social welfare can contribute towards solving South Africa's economic problems as one of the three top priorities.

unemployment (the others being immigrants, the disabled and the youth). Often, however, the problem is not unemployment as such, but rather underemployment or employment below the person's level of training - which is often related to salary and other forms of discrimination (also cf. Erwee 1984: 13-14; Van der Walt 1984: 29).

According to the working paper (Hepworth 1984: 57) it is not surprising that some women are beginning to question the legalized responsibilities and loss of freedom that marriage entails and for which there is little compensation.

However, during the UN Decade for Women that ended in 1985 much consideration was given to the woman's contribution to social development. During one of the conferences in Montreal this was summed up as, "She can do so much with so little", and in the attempts of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (head office Chicago) to promote rural development worldwide, women's awareness of their inherent strengths and of resources in the community has led to extraordinary expansion of the institute's projects as well as of the networks created between previously isolated communities.

In many of the developing countries this awareness comes about as a result of women having more time at their disposal, and this is made possible through their introduction to a small degree of technology which liberates them from the backbreaking day-to-day activities such as collecting firewood, carrying water and grinding wheat. At the Institute of Cultural Affairs all these insights

are standardized in theoretical premises and practical guidelines, and applied to other projects or in the development of new projects. Consequently the institute's work also contains an element of development research (Institute of Cultural Affairs, September 1984).

3.12 Uprooting and migration

This topic was introduced by Werner Boehm, well-known author in the field of social work in the USA, during an ICSW forum on 9 August. He pointed out that although considerable voluntary immigration was taking place, there was also a high incidence of people fleeing from violence or political unrest.

Other speakers as well as the social workers at a public welfare service in Montreal (visited by the author) that focuses specifically on the needs of immigrants pointed out, however, that it often makes little difference to the host country or to the person concerned whether he is awarded refugee* or immigrant status. To him it is immaterial whether he is fleeing for his life or escaping from poverty and lack of opportunity: both imply situations in his country of origin that makes life unbearable.

For the host country the implications in either case are that job opportunities which have become scarce everywhere, housing, etc.

* Certain countries traditionally regarded as havens for immigrants and refugees have now to some extent reached a saturation point, and although none might as yet be turned away at the airports and harbours - for instance in the state of Quebec - people who are not eventually awarded "refugee status" are repatriated or in any case have to leave the country. "Refugee status" has therefore become a sought-after label.

must be found, opposition from the locals has to be overcome and attempts made to facilitate the newcomers' adjustment to their new society (Glassman, Skolnik 1984: 45-62).

Some European countries also have the problem of the migrant or guest labourer who later becomes an immigrant, often against the wishes of the local population.

In Canada attempts are made to appoint social workers belonging to those population groups of which large numbers of immigrants are living in certain of the cities, and they then try to effect integration in society through special vocational guidance and other community programmes. (The work of the YWCA in Toronto in this regard has already been referred to.)

Because refugees, unlike immigrants, usually turn up in large numbers, temporary squatter towns have been rising rapidly in certain parts of the USA and Canada from where the inhabitants must then be resettled. This resettlement often presents a major social and political problem, and the Social Sciences Research Laboratory of the San Diego State University regularly conducts research to determine the course of the resettlement of particular communities.* In view of the emphasis placed on the task of social workers in respect of refugees and immigrants, the three social workers from Japan, the venue of the three international conferences to be held

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* A large part of the SSRL's research is concerned with opinion surveys and election analyses, and the integration of political refugees and immigrants from certain parts of the world is regarded as sensitive in view of the effect that it may have on public opinion and on election trends.

in 1986, were apologetic about their country's non-involvement in this field. They maintained that their isolation and homogeneity made them a closed and isolated society that has always given generous financial aid to South-East Asian refugees, but did not welcome aliens and were not particularly tolerant towards those strangers resident in their country. That they were hoping to bring about a change was evident from one of the Japanese speakers who said: "The need for improvement is clear", when he expressed the view that all countries enjoying more favourable conditions should co-operate towards international social development by providing aid to refugees and immigrants.

3.13 Discrimination and segregation

The international welfare community, in conjunction with the UN, has over the years highlighted the rights of various minority groups, and by focusing on a particular group by means of for instance the international year of the woman (1976), the child (1979), the disabled (1981), youth (1985) and the decade of the woman (1976-1985), the organization has contributed towards the creation of new projects, legislation and infrastructure for the various groups.

Hepworth (1984: 60) expresses the sobering thought that "mankind is a discriminating animal", and although discrimination is of course accepted in the recruitment and selection of personnel it is the task of specialists inter alios in the field of social wel-

fare to ensure that discrimination is not applied in all spheres of life.

On the other hand it is accepted that positive discrimination or affirmative action is often needed through which groups of persons previously discriminated against are currently being given some kind of preferential treatment.

Apart from its racial connotation in terms of the separation of different ethnic groups or social classes, the term segregation is used in social welfare to denote the isolation of other minority groups such as the disabled and the aged.

It has already been mentioned that a large percentage of the demonstration and development grants of the Office of Human Development Services in the USA is aimed at reducing direct public responsibility for welfare facilities and encouraging community involvement instead. Another important objective, however, is to keep members of certain disabled groups in the community instead of "isolating" them in institutions, and the research topics for which applications for grants were invited in terms of the announcement in the Federal Register of 29 May 1984 (p. 33 536) clearly point towards these ends: attendant allowances and substitute care for the frail; the relation between an aged person's "need" for institutional care, the type of housing in which he currently lives and the nature of the family ties (if any) between himself and other persons in his present place of residence; the

obstacles and incentives that influence the provision of voluntary care, and community reception centres for runaway youth.

Mainstreaming is an important strategy in this regard, and the HDS in conjunction with a division of the US Department of Education (federal) has started a long-term project through which different types of disabled and high-risk children, including the mentally disabled and those with hearing impairments, orthopedic handicaps, impaired health and emotional disturbances can be integrated in the Head Start preschool programme.

Much the same as many of the others already discussed, the above programme also contains a strong research element, particularly in view of the close links it has with universities and the emphasis placed on the demonstration and publishing of findings.

3.14 Integration of the disabled

According to Hepworth (1984: 63) it is ironic that wealthier countries identify the need and make concerted efforts to integrate the disabled, whereas in poorer countries the disabled have always been integrated.

Full participation and equality was the theme of the International Year of Disabled Persons (1981), and in one of the preceding sections attention was paid to the attempts of the disabled to mobilize themselves and to fight for their rights, and to "emerge"

from the institutions and other centres where in the past they had lived in isolation and away from the public eye.

In the section concerning the needs and rights of children and in the preceding section on discrimination and segregation, reference was made to the Head Start programme in the USA and the integration of disabled preschool children in this programme. Some of the projects related to Head Start are undertaken as experimental development projects* and the first of these has already been evaluated and is partly responsible for the current emphasis that the US government places on the mainstreaming of disabled preschool children. From the evaluation it appeared that the progress of these children under Head Start was significantly better than that of other groups to whom they were compared (US Administration for Children, Youth and Families, November 1982). Integration of the disabled in ordinary society however also entails the use of ordinary community facilities and infrastructure. This means inter alia that the disabled should have access to buildings and be able to cope with the traffic and with public transport.

The question of public transport in particular was frequently raised during the conferences, and in their "Challenge Ballot" to the candidates in the September 1984 election, the Coalition of

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* Williams (1971: 53-54) and to some extent also Tripodi et al. (1978: 73-77) discuss the essence of the experimental and development project, which is that the merit of new ideas is measured in terms of results, while a degree of control is incorporated by comparing these results to those of comparable groups that received either a different treatment programme and/or no programme.

Provincial Organizations of the Handicapped (COPOH) in Canada identified this as one of the main determinants of the disabled person's ability to participate fully in society on a more or less equal basis with other people. Studies with a view to solving certain transportation problems while at the same time accommodating the needs of different types of disabled, including the aged, are also being undertaken in the USA (Middendorf et al. 1984: 230-237).

The term developmental disability is being used increasingly (instead of differentiating terms such as blindness, deafness, mental deficiency) to indicate serious chronic conditions stemming from physical or mental impairment manifested before the age of 22 years, which lead to considerable functional restriction in various spheres of life and require services over an extended period. The Office of Human Development Services in the USA houses an Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) which through special legislation on developmental disability, supports wide-ranging services in the different states, rendering aid particularly to demonstration projects in which applied research on developmental disability is employed.

4. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Impressions

In reviewing the international conferences and study tour as an entity, the following matters made the strongest impression:

(i) The widespread large-scale unemployment both as a result of the economic recession and of technological developments that make certain job skills obsolete from time to time. This social phenomenon requires greater involvement of social workers in the training and job placement of adults as well as in the expansion of community facilities and activities for large groups of long-term unemployed.

(ii) The change of population structure in various countries as a result of an influx of refugees and immigrants. This also has an effect on the case load and task of social workers because of their involvement in the adjustment and integration of such persons through various community activities.

(iii) The wide extent to which paraprofessional personnel and volunteers are used to supplement the work of social workers and other professional persons, as well as the strong social and political position of self-help groups.

(iv) Along with this, the trend in countries that previously had a strong welfare state character to reduce state commitment to welfare - "from the welfare state to the farewell state" as it were (Canadian Council on Social Welfare, August 1984: 51). It is increasingly being expected of the private sector to take the responsibility for community services with certain incentives provided by the state, and in the process there is a movement away from the idea that welfare or social services should be undertaken on a non-profit basis before they can receive state support.

(v) The great contribution of countries such as the USA and Canada towards the creation and development of welfare and other community services, as well as the development and dissemination of new ideas, approaches and techniques in social work and social service delivery through the allocation of funds for experimenting, demonstration and evaluation.

(vi) The shift in emphasis that has occurred in research on social work, social welfare and related fields from case studies accepting and describing an existing condition, or from subjects testing certain hypotheses, to development and action research in which intervention modalities are developed, monitored and then conceptualized as theoretical models. This shift in emphasis also implies that in evaluative research the focus is less on the classical experimental design, and that greater use is made of a goal achievement model and - perhaps even more - of elucidation models in which the complexity of an intervention process is described in terms that permit monitoring, thus enabling immediate adjustment in intervention.

4.2 Recommendations

An important contribution can be made to the development of social work practice, welfare policy and welfare programme planning by enabling existing social work and welfare projects to test new approaches, techniques and strategies within a particular research design.

The following recommendations are therefore made.

(i) In evaluation research in the field of welfare more attention should be paid to the process of intervention. The contents and quality of the strategies should not be accepted as a "given", but should be subjected to the same scientific measuring and analysing as the final product (for instance whether there is progress in the target group on whose behalf the strategy is/was applied).

(ii) Government welfare divisions should take the initiative in the development of new services which can contribute towards resolving national issues. This initiative should particularly be in the form of assistance to the private sector (non-profit as well as profit-making organizations) and local authorities, in which case a research framework should be incorporated into the service. The emphasis here is on monitoring procedures which not only refines the particular service (programme, project, method, technique), but from which more refined models of social intervention (social technology) can be formulated.

(iii) Social workers should have a greater part in resolving national problems by contributing inter alia towards work creation, human settlement (including town planning, growth point development, informal housing) and the handling of different forms of pollution.

(iv) The field of welfare in particular should note the research priorities as identified by leaders in the field of social work and social welfare and as indicated in the report Social work research:

priorities and facilities (Snyman 1984),* and an attempt can be made to address one or more of the priorities by means of demonstration and development research projects.

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* The four top priorities identified in this report (HSRC S-128, 1984) are as follows:

1. The development of intervention modalities to improve and enrich family life, including programmes for marriage preparation and enrichment, preventive work with high-risk families, family therapy and guidelines for creating family support networks particularly through community development strategies.

2. The social work profession in the eighties, including the training of students, selection and appropriate job placement of social workers, the development of work load norms for different types of workers in the welfare field, and the testing of different information management systems (including the existing diary system).

3. The development of social policy that will contribute towards the solving of present economic problems, for instance through better use of senior citizens, guidelines for expanding the informal business sector through community development, and an analysis of the effect of the migrant labour system on the family life of Blacks.

4. The development of appropriate instruments for measuring the efficiency of different approaches, techniques and work methods in social work and social welfare.

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APPENDIX 1

International conferences on social development held in Montreal, Canada

1. Twenty-second international conference of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) 31 July - 4 August 1984.

2. Eighth international symposium of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) 31 July - 4 August 1984.

3. Twenty-second International Conference on Social Welfare (ICSW) 5 - 11 August 1984.

The 1984 conferences were organized by the Canadian Association of Social Workers, the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work, and the Canadian committee of the International Council on Social Welfare.

The first two events (1 and 2 above) coincided, with a number of concurrent sessions such as the opening and the most important papers.

The three conferences always coincide and are biennial events. The previous venue was Brighton, England, and the next series of conferences is planned for August 1986 in Tokyo, Japan.

The departments of social work of the South African universities are members of the IASSW through the Joint University Committee

for Lecturers in Social Work (JUC), but for various reasons the different associations for social workers in South Africa are not affiliated to the IFSW. For similar reasons no South African government department is formally affiliated to the ICSW (unlike the majority of countries where the departments of health, welfare, etc. are official members of the ICSW). Non-affiliation however only bars South Africans from participating in business meetings, but not from symposia and conferences.

Five hundred and ninety people attended the conferences of the IASSW and the IFSW, while 1 200 attended that of the ICSW held during the second conference week. With the exception of the Communist countries, most parts of the world were represented at the conferences.

Various well-known authors of books on topics such as social group work, welfare management and social work training participated in the conferences, but only the new secretary-general of the IASSW who assumed service in the IASSW's head office in Vienna, Austria, on 1 January 1984 was sounded out on the possibility of a visit to South Africa in the foreseeable future.

Liaison was also established with lecturers in social work and officials concerned with social work and social welfare in other Southern African states, and it is trusted that they can become involved more in HSRC activities particularly when overseas visitors are received.

The opportunity to attend the conferences and undertake the study tour directly afterwards is much appreciated. It was a stimulating and enriching experience and the papers and other documentation that were collected provide source material on a wide range of topics.

APPENDIX 2

Study tour

The study tour followed immediately on the conferences in Montreal and proceeded as follows: *

Date	Institution	Person interviewed	Matters discussed
13 Aug. '84	Centre for Human Relations and Community Studies, Concordia University, Montreal	Dr M. Taylor, director of the centre	Contracts in practice-related research: development of programmes in adult education
14 Aug.	Salvation Army, Montreal	Maj. J. Carter, director of public relations	Development of programmes: publicizing and utilizing of new strategies inter alia on aftercare, reconstruction and alternatives to insti-

* Matters dealt with during the interviews are discussed in greater detail in the report, and are therefore indicated only briefly here.

			tutional care
15 Aug.	YWCA, Toronto	Mrs R. O'Donnell and other personnel of the Social Work Division	Demonstration and development projects in adult education; the re-entry of women into the labour market
16 Aug.	Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	Dr Chester (director) Messrs Heeringa & Medbury, Mrs Sanchez	Data collection; assistance to institutions outside the ISR; liaison with School of Social Work
18 Aug.	Institute for Cultural Affairs, Chicago	Mrs Linda Jones and colleagues	Research and community development; demonstration projects in rural development
20 Aug.	Loyola University of Chicago (School of Social Work)	Dean and personnel of School of Social Work C. O'Reilly, J. Lassner, B. Bacon	Research by lecturers and students particularly on social work methods: computer courses for students in social work

21 Aug.	National Opinion Research Centre, University of Chicago	Dr M. Testa previously of the School for Social Services Administration	Analysis of data on welfare populations: locating users of welfare services
21 Aug.	Social Work Division, George Williams College, Chicago	Mr D. Wright, lecturer in social work	Social group work; international liaison
23 Aug.	School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley	Dean of SSW, Prof. H. Specht	Research on social work and social welfare; computer training and the use of advanced statistical techniques
24 Aug.	School of Social Welfare, UCLA	Co-dean of SSW, Prof. Jerome Cohen	International comparisons in research on planning and welfare policy

27 Aug.	Social Science Research Laboratory (SSRL), San Diego State University	Dr Paul Strand, Director of the SSRL	Liaison between the SSRL and related institutions; assistance to outsiders in respect of research on welfare programmes
27 Aug.	School of Social Work, San Diego State University	Prof. Joe Kelly, lecturer in social work	Intercultural demonstration projects as practicum for students in social work (emphasis on community development)
27 Aug.	School of Public Administration and Urban Studies, San Diego State University	Dr Robert Waste, research director of the school	Contract research for the city authorities; integrating lecturing into research
29 Aug.	Office of Human Development Ser-	Mr J.V. Dolson together with	Experimental and demonstration projects in

	vices (research and demonstration grants), Washington, DC	Dr T. Tatara of the American Public Welfare Association, Washington, DC	social welfare; analysis of the movements and circumstances of large welfare target groups
29 Aug.	Office of Human Development Services (social services policy)	Mrs Jo Ann Gasper, assistant undersecretary, US Department of Health and Human Services	Policy research according to guidelines laid down by the state (RFP's)
30 Aug.	School of Social Work, Howard University, Washington	Acting dean, Prof. Harriet MacAdoo, Mr C. Snell (postgraduate student from SA)	Research on Black families, training of students in computer work and statistical processing
30 Aug.		Dr K. Hill (previously a lectu-	Research in Australia where Dr Hill conducted

		rer at the Jan Hofmeyr School for Social Workers in SA) former lecturer at Howard University	surveys on disadvantaged areas for the Australian government
5 Sept.	Family Service America, New York	Dr Dorothy Beck, former research director, now retired and working as a research consultant	Social work research inter alia on research methods; personnel matters and client evaluation of services
		Dr Robert Rice, Director of FSA	Policy and planning research

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